

# PRESS RELEASE

## House Armed Services Committee

### Duncan Hunter, Chairman

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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#### **OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DUNCAN HUNTER**

##### ***Markup of H.R. 1950, Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005***

Today, the committee will consider H.R. 1950, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005. The House International Relations Committee has already reported this bill, which was referred to us for consideration of a narrow set of provisions under our jurisdiction.

Title 15 of the bill, dealing with satellite exports, is of particular concern. Basically, it gives the President the authority to determine how satellite exports to NATO and non-NATO major allies should be regulated, if at all, notwithstanding any other provision of law. In the fiscal years 1999 and 2000 National Defense Authorization Acts, this Committee led the way to ensure that satellite exports were properly scrutinized to ensure U.S. national security concerns were considered. Title 15 of H.R. 1950 would nullify those actions without requiring the President to propose or implement an alternative means of protecting our national security.

This Committee dealt with similar provisions when we considered last year's Export Administration Authorization Act of 2001. Members may recall that it contained similar provisions loosening national security controls on satellite exports. We rewrote those provisions and reported out of this committee a stronger bill on a bipartisan vote of 44 to 6. I hope we will do the same this evening in adopting the manager's amendment that Mr. Skelton and I have developed jointly after consultation with the House International Relations Committee.

H.R. 1950 further contains two provisions that affect the relationship between DOD and the State Department. Section 224 would authorize the DOD to charge the State Department lower rates for military airlift services, which DOD already provides at cost. Because we do not believe DOD should subsidize State Department activities, the manager's amendment would limit those lower rates to transportation of armored vehicles. The Senate Armed Services Committee included similar language in its FY2004 defense authorization bill.

Section 227 authorizes the Secretary of State to assess fees on other departments and agencies in order to build up a capital fund for improving security at its overseas facilities. While I agree security needs

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improvement, funds for the State Department capital improvements program should be authorized and appropriated under regular order, not through a financing mechanism that gives the State Department arbitrary authority to take money from other agencies. Therefore, the amendment would strike section 227 until we can determine an appropriate financing mechanism. Mr. Skelton will offer an amendment directing GAO to assess these funding issues, which I will support when it is offered.

Finally, section 701 would repeal reports on Bosnia that we required in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999. The House decided not to repeal those reports when it passed the FY2004 defense bill, in which we did repeal some 65 reports. There's no reason to change our minds now, so the amendment would strike this section.

Mr. Skelton and I worked on this amendment together and brought the House International Relations Committee into the process early on. Chairman Hyde understands and agrees with our changes in sections 224, 701, and title 15. So, at the end of the day, the changes Mr. Skelton and I are proposing will make H.R. 1950 a stronger bill that can command bipartisan support on the House floor. I urge my colleagues to vote with us and report the amended bill favorably.

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